

Date of Hearing: July 2, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Al Muratsuchi, Chair

SB 472 (Stern) – As Amended April 21, 2025

**SENATE VOTE:**

**SUBJECT:** Pupil instruction: Holocaust and genocide education: reporting and grant program

**SUMMARY:** Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to establish the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program to provide direct allocations to local education agencies (LEAs) for the purposes of providing Holocaust and genocide education and professional training; requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to issue a notice to LEAs serving students in grades 7 to 12, clarifying that social science instruction is designed to provide a foundation for the understanding of human rights issues with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust; and authorizes the CDE to issue a survey to LEAs, no more than two years after the notice, on the status of Holocaust and genocide instruction at their schools. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the CDE to issue a notice to all LEAs serving students in any of grades 7 to 12 clarifying that social science instruction specified in the course of study for grades 7 to 12 is designed to provide a foundation for the understanding of human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust. Requires the notice to advise LEAs of all of the following:
  - a) Holocaust and genocide education are part of the adopted History-Social Science Content Standards and Framework adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE); and
  - b) The History-Social Science Framework adopted by the SBE provides information about instruction on the Holocaust and genocide.
- 2) Requires the CDE to include in the notice information about the existing resources available to support LEAs and teachers in the instruction of Holocaust and genocide education.
- 3) Authorizes the CDE to issue a survey to these LEAs, no more than two years after the notice is issued, on the status of Holocaust and genocide instruction at their schools.
- 4) Requires the SPI to establish the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program to provide direct allocations to LEAs for the purposes of providing Holocaust and genocide education and professional development on Holocaust and genocide education.
- 5) Requires that grants provided under the program be used to provide resources and opportunities related to Holocaust and genocide education, which may include, but are not limited to, any of the following:
  - a) Providing instructional materials on topics about the Holocaust and genocide;

- b) Hosting an event or an organization at a schoolsite for purposes related to Holocaust or genocide education;
  - c) Financing teacher attendance at professional development opportunities focused on Holocaust and genocide education;
  - d) Hiring substitute teachers to support teacher attendance at professional development opportunities focused on Holocaust and genocide education;
  - e) Financing faculty and staff time to plan and facilitate LEA or school-based programs related to Holocaust and genocide education; and
  - f) Financing transportation to events and educational opportunities related to Holocaust and genocide education.
- 6) Requires the SPI to adopt detailed regulations for the grant program, including, but not limited to, programmatic details, application criteria and deadlines, and reporting requirements on how allocations were spent.
- 7) Establishes the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program Fund in the State Treasury, and states that moneys in the fund shall be available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to the SPI for purposes of the grant program.
- 8) Establishes the following definitions for purposes of the act:
- a) “Genocide” means, as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group:
    - i) Killing members of the group;
    - ii) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
    - iii) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about, in whole or in part, its physical destruction;
    - iv) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; or
    - v) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.
  - b) “Holocaust,” as described by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of 6,000,000 European Jews by the Nazi regime and its allies and collaborators; the Nazis also targeted other groups for persecution and murder, including Roma, people with disabilities, some Slavic peoples, especially Poles and Russians, Black people, communists, socialists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, gay men, and people the Nazis called “asocials” and “professional criminals;” and

- c) “Local educational agency” means a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Requires, through the course of study for grades 7 to 12, that LEAs offer courses in social sciences, drawing upon the disciplines of geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology, designed to fit the maturity of the pupils. Requires instruction to provide a foundation for the relations of persons to their human and natural environment, Eastern and Western cultures and civilizations; human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery, the Holocaust, and may include the Armenian Genocide; and, to the extent instruction is provided on the Spanish colonization of California or the Gold Rush Era, the treatment and perspectives of Native Americans during those periods; and contemporary issues. (Education Code (EC) 51220)
- 2) Requires instruction in social sciences to include the early history of California and a study of the role and contributions of people of all genders, Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, persons with disabilities, and members of other ethnic, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic status groups, to the economic, political, and social development of California and the United States of America, with particular emphasis on portraying the role of these groups in contemporary society. (EC 51204.5)
- 3) Requires CDE to incorporate publications that provide examples of curriculum resources for teacher use those materials developed by publishers of nonfiction, trade books, and primary sources, or other public or private organizations, that are age appropriate and consistent with the subject frameworks on history and social science that deal with civil rights, human rights violations, genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust. (EC 51226.3(a)(1))
- 4) Establishes the California Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education under the CDE’s direction, and requires the Collaborative to (1) develop and provide curriculum resources on genocide and Holocaust education, and (2) provide a statewide teacher professional development program on genocide and Holocaust education. (EC 51221.1)
- 5) Requires the SPI to designate nonprofit organizations to serve as regional social tolerance resource centers, and requires that eligible entities have a history of developing exhibits on the Holocaust and human rights. (EC 44776.2)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- While the bill’s establishment of the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program Fund would be contingent upon an appropriation, it could result in Proposition 98 General Fund cost pressures in the hundreds of thousands to low millions of dollars each year for the state to fund the program.
- The CDE estimates one-time General Fund costs of \$336,000 to develop the survey. The CDE also indicates that the costs to provide the notice to LEAs would be minor and absorbable within existing resources.

**COMMENTS:**

***Need for the bill.*** The author states, “In light of growing incidents of hate and discrimination, it has become more critical than ever to ensure that students are equipped with a full understanding of historical atrocities like the Holocaust and other genocides. California’s recent efforts to address the gaps in Holocaust and genocide education reflect the urgency of this issue. By introducing Senate Bill 472, I am championing a forward-thinking approach to combat intolerance by mandating both funding for school districts and a system for positive educational outcomes. This bill stands as a crucial step toward fostering empathy, promoting awareness, and preventing the repetition of past injustices. It is a vital investment in the education of future generations, ensuring they are not only informed but also empowered to create a more just and compassionate society.”

***Governor’s Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education report.*** In 2021, Governor Newsom established the Governor’s Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education. The Council was tasked with equipping California educators and students with tools to recognize and address antisemitism, racism, bigotry, and other forms of hate through education and empathy. To support this mission, the Council commissioned a statewide study to examine the current landscape of Holocaust and genocide education implementation across LEAs.

In 2025, the Council released a report based on this survey, which was completed by 559 respondents representing 29% of California LEAs. The study found that:

- While some districts have developed robust programs, the overall landscape remains fragmented, with success often dependent on individual educator initiative. LEA representatives emphasized the need for state-level support—ultimately pointing to the necessity of a systematic, state-supported approach to ensure the kind of equitable, high-quality Holocaust and genocide education statewide that the Council envisions.
- 26% (143 respondents) had a Holocaust and genocide education system in place. Of these, 72% (104 respondents) indicated that their programs are required, and 16% (23 respondents) said they are optional. City-designated and large LEAs were most likely to have established programs.
- Major barriers to providing this instruction included insufficient time for curriculum development, lack of appropriate resources, and lack of community resources. The majority of respondents (450) said their LEA did not provide professional development focused on Holocaust and genocide education. COEs emphasized the need for expanded instructional supports, professional learning opportunities, and community connections, especially in regions with fewer local resources.

The report made the following recommendations:

- Communicate California’s vision for Holocaust and genocide education;
- Revise the California History–Social Science content standards;
- Revise the History–Social Science Framework;
- Update, distribute, and provide guidance for the Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide;

- Continue to create a vetted central clearinghouse for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional learning;
- Increase direct funding to districts and schools for Holocaust and genocide education;
- Expand existing statewide professional learning on Holocaust and genocide education
- Monitor and evaluate educational outcomes;
- Continue to conduct additional research to inform the Council's future actions; and
- Expand, publicize, and strengthen the role of the Governor's Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education.

***Existing state instructional resources on genocide.*** According to the Senate Education Committee, content on genocide is included in a number of state curriculum documents, including:

- The Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide, which was originally developed in 1987, is posted on the CDE website, and addresses the Armenian, Cambodian, and Rwandan Genocides;
- The History–Social Science Framework adopted in 2016 contains extensive content on the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust, and mentions several other examples of genocide;
- The History-Social Science content standards, adopted in 1998, include standards relating to the Holocaust and Armenian Genocide in grades 10;
- Genocide is addressed in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum adopted in 2021; and
- The Cambodian American Studies Model Curriculum, currently under development, will contain content related to the Cambodian genocide.

***California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education.*** This bill would establish the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program Fund. Among other purposes, the program would provide funding to finance teacher attendance and the hiring of substitutes to support teacher attendance at professional development opportunities focused on Holocaust and genocide education.

While the bill does not specify this program, the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education, established SB 1277 (Stern), Chapter 890, Statutes of 2024, would likely qualify as such a professional development opportunity.

According to the Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education, it works in close partnership with the Governor's Council for Holocaust and Genocide Education in a statewide effort to elevate this education. The Collaborative's goals include:

- To create new, standards-aligned lessons on the Holocaust and genocide for all 6-12th grade students in California;
- To empower and unify educators in teaching the lessons of history and about what happens when bias goes unchecked; and

- To combat rising antisemitism and hate by creating more respectful and empathetic next generations.

***Arguments in support.*** The Jewish Public Affairs Committee writes, “California first mandated Holocaust and Genocide Education (HGE) in 1985. Yet a landmark 2025 report by the Governor’s Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education found that only 26% of Local Education Agencies (LEAs) currently offer any form of genocide education. Over 80% of LEAs surveyed reported that they do not provide professional development for educators on these topics, citing barriers such as a lack of training, instructional resources, and dedicated time.

SB 472 will address these challenges by establishing a grant program within the California Department of Education to provide direct funding to LEAs for Holocaust and genocide instruction. Grant funds may be used to support instructional materials, professional development, curriculum planning, transportation to educational events, and other direct expenses. In addition, SB 472 will require all LEAs – regardless of whether they receive funding – to submit an annual report documenting their implementation of HGE, creating new accountability and insight into statewide compliance.

This bill is urgently needed. Since October 7th, there has been a historic surge in antisemitism on California campuses – with Jewish students reporting harassment, threats, classroom bias, and administrative inaction. According to the Anti-Defamation League, 2023 saw the highest number of antisemitic incidents in the U.S. since tracking began in 1979 – a 140% increase over the previous year. But antisemitism does not occur in a vacuum. The same climate of hate also targets AAPI, Black, Latino, LGBTQ+, Muslim, and immigrant students. HGE is not just a history lesson – it’s an antidote to contemporary hate, equipping students to recognize dangerous patterns and stand up to injustice in all its forms.”

***Arguments in opposition.*** The International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (SF Bay Area) writes, “SB 472 is part of a multi-year anti-Ethnic Studies, anti-Palestine legislative campaign that aligns with the Trump administration’s attacks on all social justice education. It is part of the strategy that includes AB 1468, which attempts to police Ethnic Studies curriculum from Sacramento and to gut local control over Ethnic Studies content.

This legislation is not about thoughtful, age-appropriate education about genocide. It is a Trojan horse for pro-Israeli organizations to control critical discussion of genocide, particularly the current genocide of Palestinians in Gaza. It will cede even more power and money to the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education, which is dominated by pro-Israeli forces, not educators. The mandate for the collaborative centers the Nazi Holocaust, ignoring or minimizing many other significant genocides.

Supporters of SB 472 conflate education about the Nazi Holocaust with support for Israel, and discussion of Israel’s actions in Palestine with antisemitism. But opposition to Israel has nothing to do with antisemitism. Antisemitism is hatred of, discrimination against or stereotypes about Jews because of their religion, culture, and/or appearance. Israel is a state with policies and actions that California’s students have a right to examine through a variety of lenses, just as they would examine the policies and actions of the United States, China, or any other country.”

***Related Legislation.*** SB 1277 (Stern), Chapter 890, Statutes of 2024, codified the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education, to provide a statewide teacher professional development program on genocide, including the Holocaust.

SB 693 (Stern) of the 2021-22 Session would have 1) established the Governor's Council on Genocide and Holocaust Education and required the Council to develop best practices to facilitate the instruction on genocide and the Holocaust, identify available resources that are aligned to the best practices, and identify programs and resources to train teachers to provide education on genocide and the Holocaust; and 2) required the CDE to make available the best practices and approved lessons, resources, and materials to support the integration of instruction on genocide and the Holocaust, and to conduct a voluntary study to assess the impact of the instruction based on the best practices. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 141 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 194, Statutes of 2023, appropriated \$1.5 million to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) for allocation to the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education to continue work developing and providing curriculum resources related to genocide and Holocaust education; and providing professional development, including educator trainings, on genocide and Holocaust education.

AB 130 (Committee on Budget), Chapter 44, Statutes of 2021, appropriated \$2 million to the SPI for allocation to the Marin County Office of Education to contract with nonprofit organizations with subject matter expertise in genocide and Holocaust education to develop and provide curriculum resources related to genocide and Holocaust education; and provide professional development, including educator trainings, on genocide and Holocaust education.

SB 895 (Nguyen) Chapter 686, Statutes of 2018, requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to develop and submit to the SBE, on or before December 31, 2022, and the SBE to adopt, modify, or revise, on or before March 31, 2023, a model curriculum relative to the Vietnamese American refugee experience, a model curriculum relative to the Cambodian genocide, and a model curriculum in Hmong history and cultural studies for use in elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.

AB 1399 (Nazarian) of the 2017-18 Session would have created a recognition of study in genocide, atrocities, and human rights teacher education program, which could have been offered as part of an initial teacher preparation program or as a separate program for teachers who possess a valid single subject teaching credential. The Governor vetoed this bill with the following message:

The State Board of Education has already recognized the study of genocide and human rights in California's History-Social Science Framework. This framework specifically includes the subject of the Armenian Genocide.

In addition, the 2017 Budget Act includes \$10 million of professional development and training for teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals on the Framework, which will include the Armenian Genocide.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

American Jewish Committee - Los Angeles  
American Jewish Committee - Northern California  
American Jewish Committee - San Diego  
Anti-Defamation League  
Armenian National Committee of America - Western Region  
Cambodian Genocide Resource Center  
Central Valley Holocaust Educators' Network  
End Uyghur Genocide  
Hadassah  
Holocaust Museum LA  
Israeli-American Civic Action Network  
JCC/Federation of San Luis Obispo  
JCRC Bay Area  
Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund  
Jewish Community Relations Council, Santa Barbara  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Jewish Democratic Club of Marin  
Jewish Family and Children's Service of Long Beach and Orange County  
Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties  
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles  
Jewish Family Service of San Diego  
Jewish Family Service of the Desert  
Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley  
Jewish Federation Los Angeles  
Jewish Federation of San Diego  
Jewish Federation of the Greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys  
Jewish Free Loan Association  
Jewish Long Beach  
Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation  
Jewish Public Affairs Committee  
Jewish Silicon Valley  
Raoul Wallenberg Jewish Democratic Club  
The Genocide Education Project  
Twige Project

**Oppose**

Beyt Tikkun Synagogue  
Codepink Central Coast  
International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network  
Jewish Voice for Peace California  
Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism

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